

SHELTON-MASON COUNTY Journal

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\$1.50

New HS building 70% done

*School construction still
on schedule, budget*

By Gordon Weeks
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The three-story building under construction at Shelton High School is 70% completed, and the construction of a new Mountain View Elementary School is a week ahead of schedule.

That's the news from Robert Heron, Shelton School District's director of maintenance and operations. Both buildings are set to open to students Sept. 16 — the first day of the 2019-20 school year.

"We're moving right along," he said in an interview with the *Shelton-Mason County Journal*.

Both construction projects come courtesy of a \$65 million building bond passed by voters on Valentine's Day 2017. All seven schools in the district received upgrades.

Project manager Jeff Feeney of KMB Architects gave a detailed update on the bond projects Tuesday evening at the Shelton School Board meeting in the Oakland Bay Junior High School cafeteria.

see **SCHOOLS**, page A-15

Broadband access could grow with new state law

By Michael Heinbach
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Washington Gov. Jay Inslee signed a Senate bill into law Monday that should have a significant effect on efforts to make high-speed broadband internet service available to all of Mason County.

When Inslee signed Senate Bill 5511 at the capitol in Olympia, it launched a \$21 million program to promote broadband development in rural areas of the state, such as Mason County, and created a Statewide Broadband Office to help coordinate public and private partnerships that focus on connecting tribal and rural communities in the next 10 years.

see **BROADBAND**, page A-14



VENTING THE FLAMES

Central Mason Fire & EMS's Abel Deffinbaugh, left, and Max Hollander perform what firefighters call a vertical ventilation during a structure fire May 8 on North Third Street in Shelton. For more photos of the fire, see page A-11. *Journal photo by Shawna Whelan*

\$1.5M of grant aimed at local wetlands

*Portion of state's \$4.5M grant
funds projects for Oakland
Bay, Skookum watershed*

By Michael Heinbach
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A good chunk of grant money secured recently by the Washington state Department of Ecology is aimed at two wetlands conservation projects in Mason County.

Ecology celebrated American Wetlands Month by announcing in a May 9 news release that it received \$4.5 million in National Coastal Wetlands Conservation grant awards through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Ecology reports the money will be used to fund five projects to help the Squaxin Island Tribe, Nisqually Land Trust and the Coastal Watershed Institute acquire, restore and enhance 400 acres of coastal wetlands in Mason, Clallam, Pierce and Thurston counties.

Two of the five funded projects are in Mason County and combine to receive more than \$1.5 million in grant money funding: \$564,000 for the Skookum Valley Watershed Acquisition



The Washington state Department of Ecology announced earlier this month it secured more than \$1.5 in grant funding to acquire, restore and enhance coastal wetlands in Mason County, including \$564,000 for restoration of West Oakland Bay. *Photo courtesy of Anchor Environmental*

WHERE WILL THE MONEY GO?

- \$1 million for Phase 2 of the West Oakland Bay Restoration project
- \$564,000 for the Skookum Valley Watershed Acquisition project

project and \$1 million for Phase 2 of the West Oakland Bay Restoration project.

According to Ecology, it's partnering with the Squaxin Island Tribe to acquire and protect 158 acres of shorelines and wetlands along Skookum Creek in the Skookum Inlet Natural Preserve. The creek flows directly into Puget Sound.

Following acquisition, Ecology

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INSIDE TODAY

Locals celebrate Spell-E-
Bration fundraiser
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Day of Champions
celebrates students
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Shelton High School
runner ready for districts
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